(b) The Central Government has sanctioned 116 posts for the Central Information Commission. The Commission has constituted a Committee to assess its staff requirement. The Government shall examine the report of the Committee as and when received. The Commission has been allotted space in Delhi. A plot of land has also been allotted for construction of a building of the Commission. Staffing and providing accommodation and other facilities to the State Information Commissions are the responsibility of the State Governments. However, the Central Government is providing some assistance to the State Information Commissions under a Centrally Sponsored Scheme.

Information received under RTI

1597. SHRI SABIR ALI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that only 27 per cent RTI applicants get the required information;

(b) if so, the action being taken to increase this level substantially;

(c) the details of Information Commissioners who have been ranked as best, average and bad in the field of RTI;

(d) whether it is also a fact that most of the Information Commissioners are exbureaucrats; and

(e) if so, the plan to being about balance in that field?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN): (a) and (b) The Government, through a media report, has come to know that a study has been conducted by the Public Cause Research Foundation about functioning of the Information Commissioners. The Study, according to the media report, concludes that a person filing an appeal with an Information Commission has 27% chance of getting information. However, as per the Annual Report of the Central Information Commission for the year 2006-2007, on an average, public authorities under different Ministries received 171,404 information requests, and rejected only 15,388 requests under the RTI Act. The Central Information Commission disposed off 68.45% of the appeals according to the CIC Annual Report. The Act has an inbuilt system of ensuring that the applicants get the requisite information. It provides that if a public information officer, without any reasonable cause, refuses to accept the application or does not furnish information within the prescribed time or knowingly give incorrect, incomplete or misleading information or destroys the information, the Information Commission may impose penalty on him. It may also recommend disciplinary action against the public information officer. The Commission may also require the concerned public authority to compensate the complainant.

(c) The Government does not rank statutory bodies such as the Central Information Commission and State Information Commissions.

(d) and (e) Information about State Information Commissioners is not centrally maintained. However, out of eight Information Commissioners in the Central Information Commission, five are former civil servants. The Central Information Commissioners are appointed on the recommendation of a Committee consisting of the Prime Minister (Chairperson), the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha and a Union Cabinet Minister nominated by the Prime Minister. The Committee selects the best possible candidates for the post.

IAS Officer posted in Jharkhand

1598. SHRI PARIMAL NATHWANI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the numbers of IAS Cadre officers posted at the time of formation of the State of Jharkhand and at present;

(b) whether there is considerable reduction in these officers in Jharkhand;

(c) if so, the present strength of IAS Cadre officers excluding those on deputation/long leave; and

(d) whether this has not hampered proper and timely implementation of schemes/projects in Jharkhand?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN): (a) to (c) The Government of India in consultation with State Governments determines the strength and composition of each of the cadres of IAS and also makes such alterations ordinarily at the interval of every five years as it deems fit. The total authorized strength of IAS cadre of Jharkhand has been increased from 129 in 2001 to 143 in 2005. As per information received from the Government of Jharkhand at the time of formation of the State, 120 IAS cadre officers including 32 officers on central deputation were allocated to the State of Jharkhand and at present 77 IAS cadre officers excluding those on central deputation are in position in the State.

(d) It is for the Government of Jharkhand to ensure that at any given point of time adequate number of IAS officers against the authorized sanctioned strength are posted in the State Government for proper and timely implementation of schemes/projects in Jharkhand. In so far as Government of India is concerned it has been decided to give 04 direct recruit IAS officers to Jharkhand on the basis of CSE 2008. In addition, 24 vacancies in promotion quota of IAS cadre of Jharkhand have already been determined in consultation with the State Government.

Change in pattern of civil service exam

1599. SHRI KAMAL AKHTAR: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that UPSC has proposed to replace the current method of examination for Civil Services, both preliminary and mains;